



December 2024

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

San Rafael Swell Travel Management Plan

DOI-BLM-UT-G020-2019-0019-EA



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1 INTRODUCTION

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has completed an Environmental Assessment (EA; DOI-BLM-UT-G020-2019-0019-EA) analyzing the effects of designating an off-highway vehicle (OHV) travel network for the San Rafael Swell Travel Management Area (TMA) in Carbon, Emery, and Sevier County, Utah.

This Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) is based on the affected area and degree of the effects of Alternative E, as selected for the San Rafael Swell Travel Management Plan Travel Management Plan (TMP).

2 FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

Based on my review of the EA, the BLM Price and Richfield Field Offices have confirmed that Alternative E will not significantly affect the quality of the human environment. None of the environmental effects are considered significant under the criteria established by 40 CFR § 1501.3 (b)¹.

2.1 AFFECTED AREA

The San Rafael Swell TMA is 1,149,016 acres in size and contains 2,161 miles routes. Alternative E proposes to designate all evaluated routes as either “OHV-Open,” “OHV-Limited,” or “OHV-Closed” which will establish a travel network for use by OHV users and recreationists.² The TMP includes the adoption of an Implementation Guide detailing the long-term management strategy of the travel network to minimize impacts and user conflicts.

¹ This EA and FONSI are processed under Council on Environmental Quality’s 2022 NEPA regulations. The BLM is aware of the November 12, 2024 decision in Marin Audubon Society v. Federal Aviation Administration, No. 23-1067 (D.C. Cir. Nov. 12, 2024). To the extent that a court may conclude that the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations implementing NEPA are not judicially enforceable or binding on this agency action, the BLM has nonetheless elected to follow those regulations at 40 C.F.R. Parts 1500– 1508, in addition to the DOI’s procedures/regulations implementing NEPA at 43 CFR Part 46, to meet the agency’s obligations under NEPA, 42 U.S.C. §§ 4321 et seq.

² Though the term “OHV” is generally associated with off-road vehicles, the regulatory definition includes full-size cars and trucks as well as utility terrain vehicles (UTVs), all-terrain vehicles (ATVs), motorcycles, ebikes, etc., when in use by the general public; the regulations exempt military, fire, emergency, or law enforcement vehicles from the OHV definition while being used for emergency purposes. 43 CFR § 8340.0-5(a). Also exempt are vehicles in official BLM use and those that have been authorized by BLM or otherwise officially approved.

2.2 RATIONALE

Degree of Effects

The following have been considered in my evaluation of Alternative E in accordance with 40 CFR § 1501.3(b):

i. **Short- and long-term effects:**

Both short- and long-term effects related to designation of a OHV travel network are disclosed and analyzed in Chapter 3 of the EA. Table 1 below provides a summary of effects by duration for each resource issue analyzed in the EA, along with a significance determination.

Table 1: Summary of Duration of Effects by Resource Issues Analyzed in Detail

Issue	Short-term effects and significance conclusions	Long-term effects and significance conclusions
Resource: Cultural Resources EA Section 3.3.1		
Issue 1: How would the route network alternatives impact cultural resources within the TMA?	<p>The BLM is not authorizing new construction of routes or creating new ground disturbance; the BLM is only designating existing routes as open, limited, or closed for public motorized use. Given the effects to cultural resources and the site treatments from the Historic Properties Treatment Plan (HPTP) and the Class II commitments (see the long-term effects column for a summary), the short-term effects would be the adverse effects continuing at the sites until the HPTP implementations are installed to resolve the effects.</p>	<p>The BLM is not authorizing new construction of routes or creating new ground disturbances, only designating existing routes as open, limited, or closed for public motorized use on an as-is, where-is basis. Alternative E is an incremental redistribution of an existing motorized use as shown by the Tables 3-2, 3-3, and 3-4 in the EA. Alternative E reduces the number of routes designated for OHV use intersecting National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) listed (from 2 to 1) and NRHP eligible cultural sites (from 96 to 88). Though it does increase intersections with sites not eligible for the NRHP (from 136 to 140) and sites with undetermined NRHP eligibility (from 12 to 15). The number of sites within 100 feet of open/limited routes stays the same or slightly increases with Alternative E, with the greatest increase being for eligible and not eligible sites, both of which increased by 7 additional sites (from 51 to 58 eligible sites and from 97 to 104 not eligible sites). The number of sites within $\frac{1}{4}$ mile of open/limited routes increases for listed, eligible, and not eligible sites, with the largest increase being 23 eligible sites (from 167 to 190).</p> <p>Cultural site treatments will be implemented as identified in the</p>

Issue	Short-term effects and significance conclusions	Long-term effects and significance conclusions
		<p>HPTP, developed following Stipulation V. of the <i>Programmatic Agreement among the Advisory Council of Historic Preservation, the Bureau of Land Management-Utah and the Utah State Historic Preservation Office Regarding National Historic Preservation Act Responsibilities for Travel and Transportation Management Undertakings</i>. Thirty-nine sites were identified as potentially subject to adverse effects, which the BLM plans to resolve by implementing administrative, indirect, and direct protective measures to avoid, minimize, or mitigate the effects following standard BLM policies in Manual 8140: <i>Protecting Cultural Resources</i>. The BLM completed consultation on the HPTP by working with identified Section 106 consulting parties and tribes and received concurrence from the Utah State Historic Preservation Office. Site treatments to be implemented at 38 of the sites will include regular monitoring of 25 sites, 19 route closures, 11 dispersed campsite closures, disassembly of approximately 14 modern campfire rings from within sites, installation of at least 30 signs (regulatory, protective, directional, and administrative), construction of three protective fences, installation of four protective barriers, law enforcement patrol of eight sites for legal issues, seven professional site recordings and evaluations, and stabilization of one site through reclamation of an earthen knoll with drainage control measures. The remaining site, the Temple Mountain Uranium Mining Complex, is a large historic district comprised of hundreds of mining features and artifacts that will require implementation of 54 route closures to stop adverse effects from proliferation, delineation of 30 designated OHV routes, five educational signs, several regulatory signs, many directional</p>

Issue	Short-term effects and significance conclusions	Long-term effects and significance conclusions
		<p>signs, and regular monitoring. These site treatments will be implemented over the next three to five years. Per the Travel PA, BLM has determined several factors indicating a need for phased Class II surveys after the TMP is approved. BLM has developed and consulted on a Phased Class II Strategy of up to 500 acres on select routes and resources in indicated areas. This Class II survey will take place within 5 years of the decision. Significant long-term effects to cultural resources would not occur from Alternative E due to the HPTP and Class II strategy.</p>
Resource: Lands with Wilderness Characteristics (LWC) EA Section 3.3.2		
<p><u>Issue 2: How would the route network alternatives impact size, apparent naturalness, outstanding opportunities for solitude or primitive and unconfined recreation in lands identified by the BLM as possessing wilderness characteristics?</u></p>	<p>The BLM is not authorizing new construction of routes or creating new ground disturbance; the BLM is only designating existing routes as open, limited, or closed for public motorized use. Therefore, short-term effects to LWC units and Natural Areas under Alternative E would occur from TMP implementation actions such as placement of closure signs, installation of natural barricades, vertical mulching, and reclamation, any of which could result in localized disturbances that would temporarily contribute to a lack of solitude or opportunity for primitive recreation.</p> <p>Compared to Alternative A, in LWC, the 47 open miles of routes is a 1% decrease and the 40 limited routes in LWC is a 1% increase, meaning there is no net change in routes in LWC closed to OHV use between Alternative A and E. Compared to Alternative A, in BLM Natural Areas the miles and percent change is follows: Hondu Country has 1.2 miles of evaluated routes with 0.4 miles of open routes (increased from 0.1 miles, a 25% increase) and 0 miles of limited routes; Jones Bench 0.5 miles of evaluated routes with 0 miles of open and limited routes. Mexican Mountain has 12.4 miles of evaluated routes with 2 miles of open routes (an increase from 0.4, a 12% increase) and 0.4</p>	<p>The BLM is not authorizing new construction of routes or creating new ground disturbance; the BLM is only designating existing routes as open, limited, or closed for public motorized use. See the numbers in the short-term effects summary. In LWC units and Natural Areas where OHV use is allowed, potential long-term effects to LWCs under Alternative E include degradation or loss of naturalness, and outstanding opportunities for solitude and/or primitive and unconfined recreation. However, OHV users are expected to comply with 43 CFR § 8341.1 and not operate an OHV “In a manner causing, or likely to cause significant, undue damage to or disturbance of the soil, wildlife, wildlife habitat, improvements, cultural, or vegetative resources or other authorized uses of the public lands.”</p> <p>The implementation actions (see EA, Appendix H) are also designed to minimize effects in the long term by clarifying the route network through signs, enforcement, monitoring, and route reclamation where resource concerns exist.</p>

Issue	Short-term effects and significance conclusions	Long-term effects and significance conclusions
	<p>miles of limited routes (an increase from 0, a 3% increase); and Muddy Creek-Crack Canyon has 18 miles of open routes (an increase from 17 miles, a 3% increase) and 14 miles of limited routes (an increase from 12 miles, a 6% increase). These remain designated for public OHV use.</p> <p>Noise associated with OHVs would result in short-term effects to the constituent elements of LWC (EA, Section 3.3.2.2). Significant short-term effects to LWC and BLM Natural Areas would not occur because Alternative E is an incremental redistribution of an existing motorized use as demonstrated by the small percentages or mileages of change, so adverse effects from implementation actions would be temporary and localized, and BLM is actively pursuing grant funding and partnerships to minimize impacts to wilderness character within these areas.</p>	<p>Significant long-term effects to LWC and BLM Natural Areas would not occur because Alternative E is an incremental redistribution of an existing motorized use in these areas as demonstrated by the small percentages of change, and BLM is actively pursuing grant funding and partnerships to minimize impacts to wilderness character within these areas.</p>

Resource: Native Vegetation EA Section 3.3.3

Resource: Soils EA Section 3.3.5

Resource: Weeds EA Section 3.3.9

<p><u>Issue 3: How would the travel network alternatives impact native vegetation communities?</u></p> <p><u>Issue 6: How would the route network alternatives impact soil stability?</u></p> <p><u>Issue 7: How would the route network alternatives impact soil health and erosion potential within the TMA?</u></p> <p><u>Issue 11: How would the travel network alternatives impact the introduction and spread of noxious and invasive weeds?</u></p>	<p>The BLM is not authorizing new construction of routes or creating new ground disturbance; the BLM is only designating existing routes as open, limited, or closed for public motorized use.</p> <p>Short-term effects to native vegetation under Alternative E include the potential for plants to be crushed or damaged from OHV and related anthropogenic use, leading to reduced photosynthetic capacity and poor reproduction. Fugitive dust from OHV use can also disrupt photosynthetic processes, suppressing plant growth and vigor. In each of the TMA's primary vegetation communities, Alternative E would result in an 5% (47-mile) increase of routes available for OHV use in Inter-Mountain Basins Mixed Salt Desert Scrub, a 2% (2-mile) increase in Colorado Plateau Pinyon-Juniper Woodland, and a 3% (9-mile) increase in Inter-Mountain Basins Big Sagebrush Shrubland. In</p>	<p>The BLM is not authorizing new construction of routes or creating new ground disturbance; the BLM is only designating existing routes as open, limited, or closed for public motorized use.</p> <p>Long-term effects to native vegetation under Alternative E include potential soil erosion, surface disturbance, and soil compaction creating a loss of vegetative cover from occasional off-route vehicle travel, as well as alteration of vegetation composition from OHV and related anthropogenic use. In each of the TMA's primary vegetation communities, Alternative E would result in an 5% (47-mile) increase of routes available for OHV use in Inter-Mountain Basins Mixed Salt Desert Scrub, a 2% (2-mile) increase in Colorado Plateau Pinyon-Juniper Woodland, and a 3% (9-mile) increase in Inter-Mountain Basins Big</p>
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Issue	Short-term effects and significance conclusions	Long-term effects and significance conclusions
	<p>barren rock/sand/clay Alternative E changed some routes from open to limited but did not open any closed routes.</p> <p>Soils would continue to see compaction and erosion due to OHV use on designated routes as well as disturbance of areas on the shoulder of the route for passing, parking, and turning around. Alternative E would designate 589 routes for OHV use in highly erosive soils (a 3% increase from Alternative A), 798 routes in moderately erosive soils (a 1% increase from Alternative A), and 543 routes in areas with cryptobiotic soils (a 1% increase from Alternative A).</p> <p>Noxious and invasive weed populations are present in the TMA and will continue to be present regardless of route designations. Weed species specialize in establishment and spread in areas that have disturbed soils. OHV-Closed designations would result in old roadways having a high likelihood of noxious or invasive weed species establishment. OHV-Limited or OHV-Open designations would also result in a high probability of establishment or spread of weed species, if they are not already present. Alternative E would decrease the number of routes designated for OHV use in areas of noxious weeds by 1% (-11 routes) and would increase the number of routes designated for OHV use in areas of invasive vegetation by 3% (+28 routes).</p> <p>Since the routes are existing, the above effects would also occur in the short term until reclamation is successful on the closed routes that can be reclaimed due to lack of administrative uses (see EA Appendix H.7). Because Alternative E is an incremental redistribution of an existing motorized use as demonstrated by the low percentages of change, potential short-term effects to soils, native vegetation, and weeds and invasive species would not be significant.</p>	<p>Sagebrush Shrubland. In barren rock/sand/clay Alternative E changed some routes from open to limited but did not open any closed routes.</p> <p>Soil disturbance resulting from OHV use may exacerbate the introduction and spread of invasive plant species or noxious weeds (EA, Section 3.3.9). Alternative E would designate 589 routes for OHV use in highly erosive soils (a 3% increase from Alternative A), 798 routes in moderately erosive soils (a 1% increase from Alternative A), and 543 routes in areas with cryptobiotic soils (a 1% increase from Alternative A).</p> <p>Roads that continue to be OHV-Open or OHV-Limited carry on a higher possibility of establishment or spread of noxious/invasive weeds than if designated OHV-Closed. Alternative E would decrease the number of routes designated for OHV use in areas of noxious weeds by 1% (-11 routes) and would increase the number of routes designated for OHV use in areas of invasive vegetation by 3% (+28 routes).</p> <p>The implementation actions (see EA, Appendix H) are also designed to minimize effects for the long term through clarifying the route network, maintaining the routes to prevent users driving around problem areas, enforcing and monitoring the system, and reclaiming routes where resource concerns exist.</p> <p>Since the routes are existing, the above effects would also occur in the long term on the closed routes that cannot be reclaimed due to the need for administrative uses, though use of those routes would decrease due to the public OHV use closures (see EA Appendix H.7). Because Alternative E is an incremental redistribution of an existing motorized use as demonstrated by the low percentages of change, potential long-term effects</p>

Issue	Short-term effects and significance conclusions	Long-term effects and significance conclusions
		to soils, native vegetation, and weeds and invasive species would not be significant.

Resource: Recreation EA Section 3.3.4

<p><u>Issue 4: How would the travel network alternatives impact OHV recreation opportunities and experiences in Emery, Sevier, and Grand counties?</u></p> <p><u>Issue 5: How would the travel network alternatives impact non-motorized recreation access and experiences in the TMA?</u></p>	<p>The BLM is not authorizing new construction of routes or creating new ground disturbance; the BLM is only designating existing routes as open, limited, or closed for public motorized use. See the route mileages disclosed in the long-term impacts summary. Therefore, short-term effects to OHV recreation opportunities and experiences as well as non-motorized recreation access and opportunities includes conflict between users that may be expressed through multiple people being in the same area at the same time, or through OHV use altering the viewshed and soundscape, both of which may affect the perception of solitude and remoteness. These would be minimized by width restrictions, which create targeted recreation experiences for motorcyclists and riders in all-terrain vehicles. Motorized access in Alternative E is retained to the sites most visited by motorized and non-motorized users. While mileage has been limited in some locations, access to motorized recreation opportunities has been retained within major OHV networks such as Chimney Rock, Twin Knolls, Eagle Canyon/Coal Wash, and Coal Cliffs.</p> <p>The implementation actions (see EA, Appendix H) are designed to minimize effects by clarifying the route network through signing, enforcement, and monitoring. Also, Alternative E is an incremental redistribution of an existing motorized use as demonstrated by the low percentages of change (less than 5%) for every Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) class except primitive, and given the low mileage change in the primitive class (an increase from 0.02 miles to 0.04 miles). Therefore, significant short-term impacts to motorized and non-motorized</p>	<p>The BLM is not authorizing new construction of routes or creating new ground disturbance; the BLM is only designating existing routes as open, limited, or closed for public motorized use. Therefore, long-term effects to OHV recreation opportunities and experiences includes reducing conflicts through creation of a network of routes with various motorized opportunities while preserving non-motorized recreation access and experiences. Additionally, significant long-term effects are not anticipated because extensive opportunities for both OHV-based and non-motorized recreation will still be available in the TMA. Compared to Alternative A, the Alternative E travel network would result in a 5% (67-mile) increase in public OHV access within the TMA overall. There would be a 1% increase in open routes, a 2% increase in routes limited to 66" or less, and a 2% increase in single track routes, with a 2% decrease in routes limited by season. Alternative E emphasizes incorporating width limitations to enhance opportunities for visitors with narrower OHVs. Roughly 2% of all routes would be restricted to 66" or less, 4% would be motorized single-track, and 1% would be limited to e-bikes. Compared to Alternative A, the Alternative E travel network would result in a 3% (67-mile) increase in public OHV access within the TMA overall.</p> <p>Regarding non-motorized uses, compared to Alternative A, Alternative E increases the OHV-Open miles in semi-primitive motorized from 907 to 912 and increases the OHV-Limited miles from 48 to 115 (a 0.3% and 4.5%</p>
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Issue	Short-term effects and significance conclusions	Long-term effects and significance conclusions
	<p>recreation are not expected to occur as a result of Alternative E.</p>	<p>increase respectively). It increases the OHV-Open miles in semi-primitive non-motorized from 52 to 54 and the OHV-Limited miles from 12 to 14 (a 1.4% increase each). It also increases the miles of OHV-Open routes in primitive from 0.02 miles to 0.04 miles and maintains the miles of OHV-Limited routes at 0 miles (a 25% increase for the OHV-Open routes). The higher density of routes in the semi-primitive motorized areas does not leave large expanses of undeveloped backcountry in the Extensive Recreation Management Area (ERMA), but this is not significant because the change is a 5% increase in existing routes approved for motorized use.</p> <p>Alternative E opens motorized use on canyon rims in the San Rafael Swell Special Recreation Management Area (SRMA) which could diminish the tranquility and feelings of remoteness for non-motorized users in the canyons. Alternative E increases vehicular access to dispersed camping opportunities in the Recreation Management Zones (RMZs) and historic sites and mines. This diversifies the uses for those who are able to visit these sites. While non-motorized recreationists could still walk to them, research shows that these users are unlikely to enjoy hiking on an active road due to the noise and dust generated by vehicles and loss of opportunities for solitude. Conversely, camping opportunities could benefit non-motorized users wishing to car camp near their activity site (e.g., Mexican Mountain Road).</p> <p>The implementation actions (see EA, Appendix H) are also designed to minimize effects in the long term by clarifying the route network through signing, enforcement, and monitoring which will clarify the areas for motorized experiences and create separation for non-motorized</p>

Issue	Short-term effects and significance conclusions	Long-term effects and significance conclusions
		experiences in areas of most concern to them. Also, Alternative E is an incremental redistribution of an existing motorized use as demonstrated by the low percentages of change. Therefore, significant long-term impacts to recreation opportunities and experiences are not expected to occur as a result of Alternative E.
Resource: Special Status Plants (T&E and Select BLM Sensitive Plants) EA Section 3.3.6		
Issue 8: How would the route network alternatives impact Threatened & Endangered (T&E) plant species and select BLM Sensitive plants and their habitat within the TMA?	<p>The BLM is not authorizing new construction of routes or creating new ground disturbance; the BLM is only designating existing routes as open, limited, or closed for public motorized use. Therefore, short-term effects to Federally listed and BLM sensitive plants could result from continued OHV use, including crushing of plants, pollinators and pollinator habitat. OHV usage increases dust deposition leading to reduced stomatal conductance, increased transpiration rates, increased leaf temperature, decreased photosynthetic rates and decreased reproductive rates. The percentage of total acres of potential habitat across the TMA that would be impacted by Alternative E ranges from 5% (Winkler cactus) to 9% (Creutzfeldt-flower). Alternative E increases the acreage impacts to potential habitat for 8 of the 10 species. The increases are small, seven of the species have increases in acres of potential habitat affected of less than 1% from Alternative A. One species, Creutzfeldt-flower has an increase in potential habitat acres affected at less than 2%. One species has a decrease, Ute ladies' tresses (which decreased by 2.3%) and one remains the same, Winkler cactus. An increase of less than one percent of potential habitat affected would not result in significant effects to Federally listed and BLM sensitive plant species because Alternative E is an incremental</p>	<p>The BLM is not authorizing new construction of routes or creating new ground disturbance; the BLM is only designating existing routes as open, limited, or closed for public motorized use. Therefore, long-term effects to Federally listed and BLM sensitive plants from routes designated as OHV-Open or OHV-Limited include decreased population sizes due to low reproductive rates, decreased genetic diversity due to habitat fragmentation, loss of pollinators and loss of acceptable habitat. Surface disturbance of soil can have a long-term negative effect on soil seed banks of native plants, destroying seeds or causing them to germinate prematurely leading to death and reduction of population size. As a result of Alternative E, these effects would impact the same acreage as short-term effects. In developing Alternative E, BLM heavily considered the occupied habitat for the San Rafael Cactus. In the long-term, once the road closures and reclamation are successful, several areas within occupied habitat are expected to improve. Within the Humbug Chimney Rock Geographic Area, Alternative E closes 6 additional miles of road compared with Alternative A. In the other 5 geographical areas containing the majority of occupied habitat, Alternative E has small</p>

Issue	Short-term effects and significance conclusions	Long-term effects and significance conclusions
	<p>redistribution of an existing motorized use.</p>	<p>increases in open miles to create the minimal sustainable trail system and protect the habitat (see EA, Appendix C).</p> <p>Based on the amount of potential habitat still available across the TMA and the percentage of habitat within the wilderness areas, and the implementation actions (see EA, Appendix H) that would minimize effects for the long term through clarifying the route network, maintaining the routes to prevent users driving around problem areas, enforcing and monitoring the system, and reclaiming routes where resource concerns exist, Alternative E would not result in significant impacts to Federally listed and BLM sensitive plant species. Also, Alternative E is an incremental redistribution of an existing motorized use as demonstrated by the percentages in the short-term impacts section.</p>

Resource: Visual Resources EA Section 3.3.7

Issue 9: How would the route network alternatives impact visual resources within the TMA?	<p>The BLM is not authorizing new construction of routes or creating new ground disturbance; the BLM is only designating existing routes as open, limited, or closed for public motorized use. Therefore, short-term effects to visual resources include OHV presence and dust plumes from OHVs in the viewshed.</p> <p>In VRI Class I areas, Alternative E would designate 71 miles for OHV use, a 3% increase from Alternative A. In VRI Class II areas, Alternative E would designate 696 miles for OHV use, a 4% increase from Alternative A.</p> <p>In VRM Class I areas, Alternative E would designate 225 miles for OHV use, a 6% increase from Alternative A. In VRM Class II areas, Alternative E would designate 436 miles for OHV use, a 4% increase from Alternative A.</p>	<p>The BLM is not authorizing new construction of routes or creating new ground disturbance; the BLM is only designating existing routes as open, limited, or closed for public motorized use. Therefore, long-term effects to visual resources include damage and disruption to the natural appearance of landscapes from OHV use and access opportunities for route proliferation, contrasting lines to the natural landscape contours, and erosion changing form, line, and color and creating contrasts. The implementation actions (see EA, Appendix H) would include signing which may also create contrast.</p> <p>The implementation actions are also designed to minimize effects in the long term by clarifying the route network through signing, enforcement,</p>
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Issue	Short-term effects and significance conclusions	Long-term effects and significance conclusions
	<p>Significant short-term effects to visual resources within the TMA would not occur under Alternative E because dust would be temporary and localized. Also, Alternative E is an incremental redistribution of an existing motorized use as demonstrated by the small percentage of change.</p>	<p>monitoring, and route reclamation where resource concerns exist, effectively minimizing the route network footprint on the landscape.</p> <p>In VRI Class I areas, Alternative E would designate 71 miles for OHV use, a 3% increase from Alternative A. In VRI Class II areas, Alternative E would designate 696 miles for OHV use, a 4% increase from Alternative A.</p> <p>In VRM Class I areas, Alternative E would designate 225 miles for OHV use, a 6% increase from Alternative A. In VRM Class II areas, Alternative E would designate 436 miles for OHV use, a 4% increase from Alternative A.</p> <p>Overall, Alternative E is an incremental redistribution of an existing motorized use as demonstrated by the small percentage of change and significant long-term impacts to visual resources are not expected to occur as a result of Alternative E.</p>

Resource: Water Resources EA Section 3.3.8

Issue 10: How would the travel network alternatives impact water quality, hydrology, and riparian areas within the TMA?	<p>The BLM is not authorizing new construction of routes or creating new ground disturbance; the BLM is only designating existing routes as open, limited, or closed for public motorized use. Therefore, short-term effects to water resources, such as increased sediment or contaminant load, could result from continued OHV use, including increased erosion and sediment delivery at stream crossings, incidental use such as passing, parking, and staging, and associated maintenance (see Section H.4 in Appendix H of the EA). These effects result from tires removing soil-stabilizing agents such as vegetative cover, soil crusts, and woody debris. TMP implementation actions that could result in compaction or increased sediment or contaminant load include route maintenance (e.g., surface and ditch blading.), reclamation (e.g., raking), and</p>	<p>The BLM is not authorizing new construction of routes or creating new ground disturbance; the BLM is only designating existing routes as open, limited, or closed for public motorized use. Therefore, long-term effects to water resources under Alternative E include delivery of contaminants and sediment into stream systems and riparian areas from travel routes, wheel cuts, and tracks serving as water conduits during runoff events. Surface disturbances from motorized and non-motorized travel can also remove soil-stabilizing agents such as vegetative cover, soil crusts, and woody debris (EA, Section 3.3.8.2).</p> <p>Under Alternative E, routes designated for OHV use cross perennial streams at 10 locations and intermittent streams at 1,458 locations. Under Alternative E, 49 miles of routes</p>
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Issue	Short-term effects and significance conclusions	Long-term effects and significance conclusions
	<p>sign placement (e.g., digging post holes) (EA, Section 3.3.8.2).</p> <p>According to the Utah Division of Water Quality (UDWQ), Muddy Creek, the Price River, and the San Rafael River are considered impaired and do not meet state water quality standards (UDWQ 2004³) for total dissolved solids (TDS). The San Rafael River, which is undergoing active restoration, also has elevated salinity (USU 2013⁴). A Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) has been developed by UDWQ to address the impairment. The TMDL states the primary TDS contributors are agricultural irrigation practices, surface runoff, and natural geological loadings (UDWQ 2004³). (EA, Section 3.3.8.1)</p> <p>Under Alternative E, the following would occur: There are 10 occurrences of routes crossing perennial streams (a 1-crossing (3%) decrease from Alternative A), and a 3% increase in intermittent stream crossings of limited routes (from 70 to 147; with no increase in open route crossings) compared to Alternative A. Of the routes in or proximate to riparian areas, Alternative E would designate 49 miles open and 2 miles limited for OHV use, a 7% and 1% increase respectively over Alternative A. Due to the intensity and duration of continued OHV use on existing routes, maintenance activities, and current condition of water resources, and because Alternative E is an incremental redistribution of an existing</p>	<p>designated for public OHV use are within 100 meters of riparian areas.</p> <p>Alternative E contains the following perennial types and numbers of stream crossings.</p> <p>Price River:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bridge: 2 • Low Stream Crossing: 1 <p>San Rafael Swell River:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bridge: 4 • Low Stream Crossing: 1 <p>Muddy Creek:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bridge: 2 • Low Stream Crossing: 3 <p>According to Utah Division of Water Quality (UDWQ), Muddy Creek, the Price River, and the San Rafael River are considered impaired and do not meet state water quality standards (UDWQ 2004³) for TDS. The San Rafael River, which is undergoing active restoration, also has elevated salinity (USU 2013⁴). A TMDL has been developed by UDWQ to address the impairment. The TMDL states the primary TDS contributors are agricultural irrigation practices, surface runoff, and natural geological loadings (UDWQ 2004³). (EA, Section 3.3.8.1)</p> <p>Due to the intensity and duration of continued OHV use on existing routes, because Alternative E is an</p>

³ UDWQ (Utah Division of Water Quality). 2004. Price River, San Rafael River, and Muddy Creek TMDLs for Total Dissolved Solids: West Colorado Watershed Management Unit, Utah. Prepared by MFG, Inc. <https://documents.deq.utah.gov//water-quality/watershed-protection/total-maximum-daily-loads/DWQ-2015-006611.pdf>.

⁴ USU (Utah State University). 2013. Laub, B. G., D. Dean, J. Jarnecke, J. Jimenez, P. Budy, D. Keller, W. Macfarlane, C. McGinty, P. Birdsey, D. Eddington, I. Gowing, C. Mellon, J. Schmidt, M. Scott, D. Speas, and K. Wilson. Restoration and Monitoring Plan for Native Fish and Riparian Vegetation on the San Rafael River, Utah. USGS Utah Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit, Department of Watershed Sciences, Utah State University. Logan, UT. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/281377473_Restoration_and_Monitoring_Plan_for_Native_Fish_and_Riparian_Vegetation_on_the_San_Rafael_River_Utah/download.

Issue	Short-term effects and significance conclusions	Long-term effects and significance conclusions
	motorized use as documented by the small increase percentages, Alternative E would not have significant short-term effects to water resources.	incremental redistribution of an existing motorized use as documented by the small increase percentages (see the numbers in the short-term effects summary), and due to the implementation measures that minimize surface erosion in the Implementation Plan, such as maintenance, monitoring, route reclamation (EA, Appendix H, Section H.4, H.6, H.7.), and accounting for current conditions of water resources within the TMA, Alternative E would not have significant long-term effects to water resources.
Resource: Wildlife: Special Status Fish (T&E and BLM Sensitive Species) EA Section 3.3.10		
<u>Issue 12: How would the route network alternatives impact T&E and BLM Sensitive fish species and habitat within the TMA?</u>	The BLM is not authorizing new construction of routes or creating new ground disturbance; the BLM is only designating existing routes as open, limited, or closed for public motorized use. Therefore, under Alternative E, TMP implementation actions that could result in short-term effects to special status fish species include route maintenance (e.g., surface and ditch blading, drainage structure installations, etc.), ripping and seedbed preparation of closed routes, and sign installations (digging post holes). Short-term effects to fish that could result from OHV use include increased erosion and sediment delivery at stream crossings. These effects are likely to be minor and temporary because they occur infrequently (EA, Section 3.3.10.4); and because Alternative E is an incremental redistribution of an existing motorized use (as shown by the acreage decreases in the long-term effects section), therefore, no significant effects would occur from Alternative E.	The BLM is not authorizing new construction of routes or creating new ground disturbance; the BLM is only designating existing routes as open, limited, or closed for public motorized use. Therefore, long-term effects to fish under Alternative E would result from the use of the existing travel routes, which could potentially have effects on special status fish species that include physical or chemical habitat modification or direct mortality from vehicle strikes at crossings. OHV use and maintenance activities could increase erosion, sedimentation, salinity, and contaminant delivery into critical habitat for ESA-listed fish (EA, Section 3.3.10). Under Alternative E, miles of existing routes designated for public OHV use within the Area of Impact (AOI ⁵) would impact 7,095 acres of Colorado pikeminnow habitat (down from 8,063 under Alternative A, an 8% decrease), 834 acres of bonytail and razorback sucker habitat (down from 848 under Alternative A, a 2% decrease), 301 acres of flannelmouth sucker and bluehead sucker habitat (down from

⁵ The AOI for special status fish is a 100-meter buffer on either side of routes designated OHV-Open or OHV-Limited.

Issue	Short-term effects and significance conclusions	Long-term effects and significance conclusions
		<p>398 under Alternative A, a 1% decrease), and 288 acres of roundtail chub habitat (down from 378 under Alternative A, a 1% decrease). The implementation measures that minimize surface erosion in the Implementation Plan, such as maintenance, monitoring, and route reclamation (EA, Appendix H, Section H.4, H.6, H.7.), would minimize impacts to fish species.</p> <p>These effects are likely to be minor and temporary because they occur infrequently (EA, Section 3.3.10.4); and because Alternative E is an incremental redistribution of an existing motorized use as shown by the affected acreage decreases and small percentages of change), therefore, no significant effects would occur from Alternative E.</p>
Resource: Wildlife: Special Status Terrestrial Species (T&E and BLM Sensitive Species) EA Section 3.3.11		
<u>Issue 13: How would the route network alternatives impact federally listed, candidate, and select BLM Sensitive terrestrial wildlife species and their habitat within the TMA?</u>	<p>The BLM is not authorizing new construction of routes or creating new ground disturbance; the BLM is only designating existing routes as open, limited, or closed for public motorized use. Therefore, short-term effects to special status terrestrial species resulting from OHV noise under Alternative E include effects to nest-site selection or masking of biologically important sounds, including mating calls or predator and prey sounds, as well as causing alerting or flushing.</p> <p>TMP implementation actions that could result in short-term effects to special status terrestrial species and their habitats because of increased human activity include installation of new signs; route maintenance (surface blading, installing water control structures, surfacing, etc.); route decommissioning or reclamation (including hand-raking the ground and planting seed, grading/recontouring); or installation of fencing (EA, Appendix H). These activities would be short in duration; and Alternative E is an</p>	<p>The BLM is not authorizing new construction of routes or creating new ground disturbance; the BLM is only designating existing routes as open, limited, or closed for public motorized use. Therefore, long-term effects to special status terrestrial species resulting from OHV use under Alternative E include direct mortality, injury, habitat destruction, habitat alteration, and habitat fragmentation. OHV use can also trigger behavioral changes like increased flight and vigilance, and result in the disruption or displacement of other essential behaviors including breeding, nesting, foraging, hunting, and predator-avoidance activities. Additionally, roadside use, whether by foot, camping, roadside parking, passing, staging, or other means, can lead to the alteration of animal behavior or alteration or destruction of foraging, burrowing, or nesting habitats (EA, Section 3.3.11).</p>

Issue	Short-term effects and significance conclusions	Long-term effects and significance conclusions
	<p>incremental redistribution of an existing motorized use as shown by the acreage changes reported in Tables 3-50 and 3-51 of the EA, therefore, significant short-term effects to special status terrestrial species would not occur as a result of Alternative E.</p>	<p>Golden eagle, kit fox, and white-tailed prairie dog will each experience a 1% increase in acreage affected (golden eagle from 592,213 to 607,723, kit fox from 95,859 to 100,184, and white-tailed prairie dog from 91,730 to 96440). Burrowing owl and ferruginous hawk will experience a 2% increase in acreage affected (burrowing owl from 260,468 to 271,410 and ferruginous hawk from 319,213 to 607,723). Acreage affected for Mexican spotted owl, yellow-billed cuckoo and monarch butterfly remains substantially the same. Southwestern willow flycatcher acreage impacts would be reduced by 1% (from 2,590 to 2,398).</p> <p>In addition, the implementation measures such as signing which direct users away from sensitive habitats, maintenance to keep users from driving around problem areas and creating additional disturbance, enforcement of the network, monitoring of the network, and planned reclamation (Appendix H, Section H.4, H.6, H.7) would minimize long-term effects, and Alternative E is an incremental redistribution of an existing motorized use as shown by the percent changes, so impacts to special status terrestrial species would not be significant.</p>

ii. Beneficial and adverse effects:

Both beneficial and adverse effects related to designation of a OHV travel network are disclosed and analyzed in Chapter 3 of the EA. Table 2 below provides a summary of effects by type of impact for each resource issue considered in the EA, along with significance determination.

Table 2: Summary of Beneficial and Adverse Effects of Issues Analyzed in Detail

Resource Issue	Effect Summary (Both Beneficial and Adverse) and Significance Conclusions
Resource: Cultural Resources EA Section 3.3.1	<p>The BLM is not authorizing new construction of routes or creating new ground disturbance; the BLM is only designating existing routes as open, limited, or closed for public motorized use. Therefore, adverse effects include potential damage to site NRHP significance through erosion, exposure, vandalism or looting from use of routes, implementation of the TMP, and recreational use of</p>

Resource Issue	Effect Summary (Both Beneficial and Adverse) and Significance Conclusions
	<p>public lands as described in the long-term effects section above. The BLM avoided or minimized effects at a route specific level using measures including but not limited to closure (avoidance) and the minimization measures described in the HPTP and the Class II survey strategy. BLM policy dictates the Field Manager will prioritize avoidance of significant cultural resource sites when reasonable and feasible to do so. When BLM identified disproportionately large OHV impacts or unresolved conflicts, the BLM prioritized closure as demonstrated by Alternative E reducing the number of routes designated for OHV use intersecting NRHP listed (from 2 to 1) and NRHP eligible cultural sites (from 96 to 88). For open and limited routes, through the HPTP, the BLM chose administrative or direct site treatment measures to minimize impacts where necessary as documented in the HPTP and the Class II survey strategy. Therefore, significant adverse effects to cultural resources would not occur under Alternative E.</p> <p>Beneficial effects may occur from reducing the miles of routes designated for OHV use intersecting NRHP listed (from 2 to 1) and NRHP eligible cultural sites (from 96 to 88).</p>
Resource: Lands with Wilderness Characteristics (LWC) EA Section 3.3.2	<p>The BLM is not authorizing new construction of routes or creating new ground disturbance; the BLM is only designating existing routes as open, limited, or closed for public motorized use. Therefore, adverse effects would result from motorized use of the 47 open and 40 limited routes in LWC, and the 20.4 miles of open and 14.4 miles of limited routes in Natural Areas. The BLM avoided or minimized effects at a route specific level using measures including but not limited to closure (avoidance), vehicle type limitations (which reduces the number of vehicles on the route by limiting the type of vehicle that can use the route), and the minimization measures described in the Implementation Guide, such as the prioritization of patrols in areas of LWC. When BLM identified disproportionately large OHV impacts or unresolved conflicts to LWC or BLM Natural Areas, the BLM prioritized closure as demonstrated by the designation of 153 miles as OHV-Closed in LWC units and 13 miles as OHV-Closed in BLM Natural Areas. Since, Alternative E is an incremental redistribution of an existing motorized use, as shown by the mileages above, effects to wilderness characteristics (naturalness, size, outstanding opportunities for solitude and/or primitive, unconfined recreation) of BLM Natural Areas and LWC units would not be significant.</p> <p>Beneficial effects would result under Alternative E from prioritized monitoring of routes in LWC and Natural Areas and reclamation of eligible routes (see EA section H.7). This would reduce the overall network footprint and associated effects within or near BLM Natural Area and LWC units (EA, Section 3.3.2.2).</p>
Resource: Native Vegetation EA Section 3.3.3 Resource: Soils EA Section 3.3.5 Resource: Weeds EA Section 3.3.9	<p>The BLM is not authorizing new construction of routes or creating new ground disturbance; the BLM is only designating existing routes as open, limited, or closed for public motorized use. Therefore, adverse effects occur from OHV use, particularly on hillslopes, accelerating water erosion by decreasing infiltration rates, loosening surfaces, and channeling run-off (EA, Section 3.3.5.1). As vegetative cover, water infiltration, and soil-stabilizing crusts are diminished or disrupted, the precipitation runoff rates increase, further accelerating rates of soil erosion (EA, Section 3.3.5.1). These changes, along with accidental weed seed dispersal, may exacerbate the introduction and</p>

Resource Issue	Effect Summary (Both Beneficial and Adverse) and Significance Conclusions
	<p>spread of invasive plant species and alternative vegetative communities (EA, Section 3.3.9). Vegetation loss due to soil erosion, weed dispersal, crushing, and dusting are also adverse effects which can change the species composition along routes open to OHV use. The TMP Implementation Guide would minimize adverse effects to soils, native vegetation, noxious weeds, and invasive species through signing, reclamation, monitoring, and enforcement (EA, Appendix H). The BLM avoided or minimized effects at a route specific level using measures including but not limited to closure (avoidance) and the minimization measures described in the Implementation Guide. When BLM identified disproportionately large OHV impacts or unresolved conflicts, the BLM prioritized closure. Alternative E closes 274 miles of routes in Inter-Mountain Basins Salt Desert Scrub, 61 miles of routes in Barren-Rock/Sand/Clay, 48 miles of routes in Colorado Plateau Pinyon Juniper Woodland, 116 miles of routes in Inter-Mountain Basins Big Sagebrush Shrubland, 402 miles of routes within $\frac{1}{4}$ mile of noxious weeds, 536 miles of routes within $\frac{1}{4}$ miles of invasive vegetation, 754 miles of routes crossing highly erosive soils, 1,068 miles of routes in moderately erosive soils, and 690 miles of routes within 150 feet of cryptobiotic soils. Since the routes are existing, the adverse effects would occur in the short term until reclamation is successful on the closed routes that can be reclaimed due to lack of administrative uses, and in the long term on the closed routes that cannot be reclaimed due to the need for administrative uses, though use of those routes would decrease due to the public OHV use closures (see EA Appendix H.7). For open and limited routes, BLM would implement maintenance measures from Appendix H such as an ongoing weed control program, and route maintenance for erosion control, as well as monitoring for soil erosion. In addition, several routes in the Wedge Area were closed because recreationists were unnecessarily traveling through highly sensitive soils. Effects to soils, native vegetation, and weeds would not be significant because Alternative E is an incremental redistribution of an existing motorized use as shown by the small percentages of change as shown in the long- and short-term effects conclusions.</p> <p>Beneficial effects on routes designated as closed to OHV use result from reducing the number of routes designated for OHV use in areas of noxious weeds by 3% (-11 routes) and from allowing closed routes that don't have administrative uses to reclaim.</p>
Resource: Recreation EA Section 3.3.4	<p>Adverse effects to OHV recreation opportunities and experiences as well as non-motorized recreation access and opportunities include conflict between users that may be expressed through multiple people being in the same area at the same time, or OHV use altering the viewshed and soundscape, both of which may affect the perception of solitude and remoteness. The BLM is not authorizing new construction of routes or creating new ground disturbance; the BLM is only designating existing routes as open, limited, or closed for public motorized use. Compared to Alternative A, the Alternative E travel network would result in a 5% (67-mile) increase in public OHV access within the TMA overall. There would be a 1% increase in open routes, a 2% increase in routes limited to 66" or less, and a 2% increase in single track routes, with a 2% decrease in routes limited by season. Alternative E emphasizes incorporating width limitations to enhance opportunities for visitors with narrower OHVs.</p>

Resource Issue	Effect Summary (Both Beneficial and Adverse) and Significance Conclusions
	<p>Roughly 2% of all routes would be restricted to 66" or less, 4% would be motorized single-track, and 1% would be limited to e-bikes.</p> <p>Regarding non-motorized uses, compared to Alternative A, Alternative E increases the open miles in semi-primitive motorized from 907 to 912 and increases the limited miles from 48 to 115 (a 0.3% and 4.5% increase respectively). It increases the open miles in semi-primitive non-motorized from 52 to 54 and the limited miles from 12 to 14 (a 1.4% increase each). It also increases the miles of open routes in primitive from 0.02 miles to 0.04 miles and maintains the miles of limited routes at 0 miles (a 25% increase for the open routes). The higher density of routes in the semi-primitive motorized areas does not leave large expanses of undeveloped backcountry in the ERMA, but this is not significant because the change is a 5% increase in existing routes approved for motorized use.</p> <p>Alternative E opens motorized use on canyon rims in the San Rafael Swell SRMA which could diminish the tranquility and feelings of remoteness for non-motorized users in the canyons. Alternative E increases vehicular access to dispersed camping opportunities in the RMZs and historic sites and mines. This diversifies the users who are able to visit these sites. While non-motorized recreationists could still walk to them, research shows that these users are unlikely to enjoy hiking on an active road due to the noise and dust generated by vehicles and loss of opportunities for solitude. Conversely, camping opportunities could benefit non-motorized users wishing to car camp near their activity site (e.g., Mexican Mountain Road).</p> <p>The BLM avoided or minimized conflict between motorized and non-motorized users at a route specific level using measures including but not limited to closure (avoidance) and the minimization measures described in the Implementation Guide. When BLM identified disproportionately large OHV impacts or unresolved conflicts, the BLM prioritized closure. For example, Alternative E closes 447 miles of routes in semi-primitive motorized, 78 miles of routes in the semi-primitive non-motorized, and 0.04 miles of routes in the primitive ROS class, areas where the 2008 Price RMP decided to maintain a more natural setting that respectively has moderate modifications, that has subtle modifications, or that is unmodified. For open and limited routes, BLM would implement measures from Appendix H to monitor and minimize impacts. The implementation actions (EA, Appendix H) are designed to reduce adverse effects in the long-term by clarifying the route network through signing, enforcement, and monitoring motorized and non-motorized users in areas of highest attraction to them. Therefore, significant adverse impacts to recreation opportunities and experiences are not expected to occur as a result of Alternative E.</p> <p>Beneficial effects to OHV recreation opportunities and experiences include reduced user conflicts from designating a network of routes with various and diverse motorized opportunities while also preserving non-motorized recreation opportunities and activities. For example, roughly 2% of all routes would be restricted to 66" or lower, 4% would be motorized single-track, and 1% would be limited to e-bikes. Compared to Alternative A, the Alternative E travel network would result in a 3% (67-mile) increase in public OHV access within the TMA overall. Overall, Alternative E provides a variety of recreation opportunities to a variety of users.</p>

Resource Issue	Effect Summary (Both Beneficial and Adverse) and Significance Conclusions
Resource: Special Status Plants (T&E and Select BLM Sensitive Plants) EA Section 3.3.6	<p>The BLM is not authorizing new construction of routes or creating new ground disturbance; the BLM is only designating existing routes as open, limited, or closed for public motorized use. Adverse effects from OHV use of designated routes include declines in reproduction and potentially a decline in population size due to dust interfering with pollination on high use routes and crushing of individuals that spread onto low use routes. Route closures would provide benefits such as protection to rare plants and habitat. Acreage of habitat varies by species. San Rafael cactus has the largest percentage of potential and occupied habitat within the TMA. Using it as an example, under Alternative E there would be 85,191 acres impacted by OHV-Open or OHV-Limited designated routes, which is 7% of the total acres of potential habitat. There would also be 31,935 acres within the AOI of OHV-Closed designated routes in the suitable habitat, thereby benefiting the species. The greatest habitat acreage impact increases are in Creutzfeldt-flower habitat acres which would increase less than 2%. And psoralea globemallow habitat acres which would increase less than 1%. All other species habitat impacts would increase 0.4% or less with the exception of Winkler cactus which would remain the same. The implementation actions (EA, Appendix H) would minimize long-term effects through clarifying the route network, maintaining routes to prevent users from driving around problem areas and creating additional disturbance, enforcing and monitoring the system, and reclaiming routes where resource concerns exist. The BLM avoided or minimized effects at a route specific level using measures including but not limited to closure (avoidance) and the minimization measures described in the Implementation Guide. When BLM identified disproportionately large OHV impacts or unresolved conflicts, the BLM prioritized closure, as demonstrated by the selected route networks within the six Route Network Geographic Areas that contain the majority of the occupied habitat, Behind the Reef, Buckhorn/Wedge, Coal Cliffs, Humbug Chimney Rock, Moore Cutoff/Dutch Flats, and North Jurassic/Flat Top. The roads designated as open within these areas were chosen to provide for sufficient access while reducing impacts such as habitat fragmentation as much as possible. Within the Humbug Chimney Rock area 6 additional miles were closed to protect the cactus. For open and limited routes, BLM would implement measures from Appendix H such as prioritizing sign placement to educate the visiting public about special status plant habitats, and prioritizing patrols in special status species habitats. Also, Alternative E is an incremental redistribution of an existing motorized use as shown by the percent of acreage change between Alternatives A and E. Therefore, significant adverse effects to special status plants are not expected to occur as a result of Alternative E.</p> <p>Beneficial effects include a 2.3% decrease in acreage affected for Ute ladies'-tresses.</p>
Resource: Visual Resources EA Section 3.3.7	<p>The BLM is not authorizing new construction of routes or creating new ground disturbance; the BLM is only designating existing routes as open, limited, or closed for public motorized use, as shown by the small percentage of change as documented in the short- and long-term effects analysis. Therefore, adverse effects to visual resources include damage and disruption to the natural</p>

Resource Issue	Effect Summary (Both Beneficial and Adverse) and Significance Conclusions
	<p>appearance of landscapes through OHV use and access opportunities leading to route proliferation, contrasting lines to the natural landscape contours, dust plumes from use, and erosion changing form, line, and color and creating contrasts. However, establishing a route network that is well defined for the public and that includes management components can help reduce these effects. The implementation actions (EA, Appendix H) would include signing which may also result in contrast. The TMP's implementation actions are designed to minimize effects in the long term by clarifying the route network through signing, enforcement, monitoring, and route reclamation where resource concerns exist, thereby minimizing the route network footprint on the landscape. The BLM avoided or minimized effects at a route specific level using measures including but not limited to closure (avoidance) and the minimization measures described in the Implementation Guide. When BLM identified disproportionately large OHV impacts or unresolved conflicts, the BLM prioritized closure including 6 miles of routes in VRI Class 1 areas, 261 miles of routes in VRI Class II areas, 40 miles of routes in VRM Class I areas, and 208 miles of routes in VRM Class II areas. These are also prioritized for reclamation as documented in Appendix H. Therefore, significant adverse effects to visual resources are not expected to occur as a result of Alternative E. Beneficial effects would result from closure of OHV routes in sensitive viewsheds.</p>
Resource: Water Resources EA Section 3.3.8	<p>The BLM is not authorizing new construction of routes or creating new ground disturbance; the BLM is only designating existing routes as open, limited, or closed for public motorized use. Therefore, adverse effects from travel routes and OHV use include sediment delivery from runoff, altered stream flows, decreased bank stability, and channel downcutting. Implementation measures associated with reducing surface erosion in the Implementation Guide, such as maintenance, monitoring, and route reclamation (EA, Appendix H, Section H.4, H.6, H.7) on routes near riparian areas and streams would help to minimize these adverse effects and thus benefit water resources (EA, Section 3.3.8.2).</p> <p>Under Alternative E, sign placement would encourage managed travel on stable designated routes that are less disruptive to waterways and seeding and planting of closed routes could help reestablish and/or enhance native vegetation communities, thereby improving soils' resiliency to water impairment-related erosion. The BLM avoided or minimized effects at a route specific level using measures including but not limited to closure (avoidance) and the minimization measures described in the Implementation Guide. When BLM identified disproportionately large OHV impacts or unresolved conflicts, the BLM prioritized closure, such as the closure of the Price River low water crossings. For open and limited routes, BLM would implement measures from Appendix H to monitor and minimize impacts, such as the monitoring of route SS1072 for wetland and spring system effects. Also, Alternative E is an incremental redistribution of an existing motorized use as shown by the quantification in the short-term and long-term effects conclusions and the low percentage or increment of change between alternatives. Therefore, significant adverse effects to water resources are not expected to occur as a result of Alternative E. Beneficial effects would result from the decreased perennial stream crossings.</p>

Resource Issue	Effect Summary (Both Beneficial and Adverse) and Significance Conclusions
Resource: Wildlife: Special Status Fish (T&E and BLM Sensitive Species) EA Section 3.3.10	<p>The BLM is not authorizing new construction of routes or creating new ground disturbance; the BLM is only designating existing routes as open, limited, or closed for public motorized use. Therefore, adverse effects to water resources within conditional AOIs for special status fish species, such as sediment delivery from runoff, altered stream flows, decreased bank stability, and channel downcutting, would also impact these species. Designations that limit, decommission, or reclaim closed routes on or near waterways, floodplains, riparian areas, and wetlands would minimize or stop the adverse effects by limiting or eliminating OHV use (EA, Section 3.3.10). Within the AOI for special status fish species in the TMA, routes designated for public OHV use under Alternative E would impact 7,095 acres of Colorado pikeminnow habitat (down from 8,063 under Alternative A, an 8% decrease), 834 acres of bonytail and razorback sucker habitat (down from 848 under Alternative A, a 2% decrease), 301 acres of flannelmouth sucker and bluehead sucker habitat (down from 398 under Alternative A, a 1% decrease), and 288 acres of roundtail chub habitat (down from 378 under Alternative A, a 1% decrease). The Implementation Guide measures would minimize effects through sign placement to clarify the travel network around the AOI, route maintenance to address erosion issues, network enforcement, network monitoring, and reclamation of routes as planned (EA, Section 3.3.10). The BLM avoided or minimized effects at a route-specific level using measures including but not limited to closure (avoidance) and the minimization measures described in the Implementation Guide. When the BLM identified disproportionately large OHV impacts or unresolved conflicts, the BLM prioritized closure, such as the closure of the Price River low water crossings. The BLM would implement measures from Appendix H to monitor and minimize impacts. Also, Alternative E is an incremental redistribution of an existing motorized use as shown by the quantification in the short-term and long-term effects conclusions and the low percentage or increment of change between alternatives. Consequently, effects to special status fish species would not be significant under Alternative E.</p> <p>Beneficial effects would result from the decreased acres of impacted habitat for Colorado pikeminnow, bonytail, razorback sucker, flannel mouth sucker, bluehead sucker, and roundtail chub habitat.</p>
Resource: Wildlife: Special Status Terrestrial Species (T&E and BLM Sensitive Species) EA Section 3.3.11	<p>The BLM is not authorizing new construction of routes or creating new ground disturbance; the BLM is only designating existing routes as open, limited, or closed for public motorized use. Therefore, adverse effects to special status terrestrial species from OHV-related activities include direct mortality from vehicle collisions, habitat avoidance and abandonment, interference of daily movement, and increased physical stress. These effects can escalate seasonally during sensitive birthing, rearing, and breeding seasons (EA, Section 3.3.11). Effects to vegetation and water resources also impact wildlife species that rely on them for foraging, cover, migration, and breeding habitat.</p> <p>Golden eagle, kit fox, and White-tailed prairie dog will each experience a 1% increase in acreage affected (golden eagle from 592,213 to 607,723, kit fox from 95,859 to 100,184, and white-tailed prairie dog from 91,730 to 96440). Burrowing owl and ferruginous hawk will experience a 2% increase in acreage affected (burrowing owl from 260,468 to 271,410 and ferruginous hawk from 319,213 to 607,723). Acreage affected for Mexican spotted owl, yellow-billed</p>

Resource Issue	Effect Summary (Both Beneficial and Adverse) and Significance Conclusions
	<p>cuckoo and monarch butterfly remains substantially the same. Impacts to southwestern willow flycatcher habitat would experience a 1% decrease (from 2,590 to 2,398). When BLM identified disproportionately large OHV impacts or unresolved conflicts, the BLM prioritized closure, such as the closure of several routes in the Wedge area because they were located in a way that they would unnecessarily impact crucial bighorn sheep lambing habitat. For OHV-Open and OHV-Limited routes, the BLM would implement measures from Appendix H to monitor and minimize impacts, such as monitoring of SS1072 for wetland and spring system effects. In addition, the BLM would minimize effects through prioritization of sign placement in special status species habitats to clarify the travel network around the AOI, route maintenance to address erosion issues, network enforcement, network monitoring, and reclamation of routes as appropriate (EA, Section 3.3.11).</p> <p>Additionally, a Biological Assessment was prepared by the BLM in accordance with the Endangered Species Act (ESA) Section 7, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service concurred with BLM's determination of effects to federally listed species, that effects to special status terrestrial species would not be significant under Alternative E.</p> <p>Beneficial effects would result from the decreases in affected habitat acreage for southwestern willow flycatcher.</p>

iii. Effects on public health and safety:

The BLM is not authorizing new construction of routes or creating new ground disturbance; the BLM is only designating existing routes as open, limited, or closed for public motorized use. Therefore, Alternative E is designed to minimize effects to health and public safety by establishing a travel system with OHV designations and an Implementation Plan that would reduce user conflicts and provide for route maintenance and signing for safer conditions. Effects to public health and safety as a result of designating an OHV travel network was considered and analyzed in the EA as they relate to recreation (Section 3.3.4), the San Rafael Swell Recreation Area (Section A.4 AIB-4), public health and safety (Section A.13 AIB-13), minerals (Section A.15 AIB-15), dark night skies (Section A.16 AIB-16), and natural soundscapes (Section A.17 AIB-17). Also, Alternative E is an incremental redistribution of existing motorized use. Based on the analysis provided, Alternative E would not result in significant effects on public health and safety.

iv. Effects that would violate Federal, State, Tribal, or local laws protecting the environment:

The BLM is not authorizing new construction of routes or creating new ground disturbance; the BLM is only designating existing routes as open, limited, or closed for public motorized use. Therefore, none of the effects associated with Alternative E would violate any Federal, State, Tribal or local law protecting the environment. Alternative E is consistent with applicable laws, land management plans, and policies.

Endangered Species

For information about Endangered Species Act consultation see EA section 4.1.3.

Cultural Resources

National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) Section 106

For information about NHPA consultation see EA section 4.1.1.

Government-to-Government NEPA Tribal Consultation

For information about Government-to-Government NEPA Tribal Consultation see EA section 4.1.2.

3 APPROVAL

CONCLUSION

Based upon a review of the Environmental Assessment for the San Rafael Swell TMP and supporting documents, I have determined that Alternative E does not significantly affect the quality of the human environment. None of the environmental effects analyzed exceed those effects described in the Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Price Field Office Record of Decision and Approved Resource Management Plan (2008 Price RMP) and the Richfield Field Office Record of Decision and Approved Resource Management Plan (2008 Richfield RMP), as amended, and none are considered significant under the criteria established by 40 CFR § 1501.3(b).

APPROVAL

KYLE BEAGLEY  Digitally signed by KYLE BEAGLEY
Date: 2024.12.30 23:28:27 -07'00'

Authorized Officer

Date